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# nature net

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## Local communities to have a say in the development of the Tana Delta

Nature Kenya

*Key opinion leaders at Wakon, Tana River Delta. The court ruled in favor of full community participation in land use planning at the delicate delta* *Pic: F. Kagema*

A historic ruling was made in the long running court cose brought by locol communities in the Tono River Delta. High Court Judge Lody Justice Mumbi Ngugi ruled that short, medium and long range land use development plans for the Tana River Delto hove to be developed with full porticipation of local communities as well os government ogencies ond other stokeholders with an interest in the areo.

TARDA (the Tona and Athi Rivers Development Authority), one of the respondents to the suit, was requested to shore its short ond long term land use development plans with communities ond stokeholders. The judge olso colled for periodic evoluotions of the plons.

Justice Ngugi noted thot there wos need to hove one ogency to oversee the development of the Tono River Delto.

> *"The essence of the case is not to stop or deny development, but to have Government agencies undertake a responsible, transparent and collaborative approach to planning."*

In August 2010, representotives of formers, fishermen, postorolists ond conservotion groups in the Tono Delto went to court seeking to holt lorge-scole commerciol developments in the Tona Delto until o mosterplan wos in ploce. The communities sued the Attorney General, Notionol Environment Monogement Authority, Tono and Athi Rivers Development Authority, Tono River County Council, Commissioner of Londs and Water Resources Monogement Authority.

"The essence of the cose is not to stop or deny development, but to hove Government ogencies undertoke o responsible, tronsporent ond colloborotive approoch to plonning in order to ovoid the disosters of the past, whilst working to see thot the Millennium Development Gools ore achieved within o sustoinoble living fromework thot respects the

*Cont'd in the next page*

## Nature Kenya Wishes Kenyans Peaceful Elections

**NATURE KENYA** wishes all Kenyans a peaceful election period. The devolved government will present both opportunities and challenges for sustainable management of nature. We look forward to working with communities, counties, national government and conservation partners for good environmental governance.

The Nature Kenya office will remain closed on March 4 and 5. The Wednesday Morning Birdwalk is scheduled for March 6.

## 103rd Annual General Meeting of the East Africa Natural History Society

**Wednesday 8th May 12:00 - 2.00 p.m.**
**Louis Leakey Hall, Nairobi National Museum**

G. Shorrock

Topi antelopes

**12.00 p.m. Tea/ Coffee**
**12.30 p.m. Barbeque**
**1.00 p.m Convene at the Hall**

**Agenda**

- Minutes of the 101st AGM
- Matters Arising from previous minutes
- Chairman's Report
- Hon. Treasurer's Report
- Appointment of Auditor
- Committees & Projects Presentation
- Nature Uganda Report
- Election of Executive Committee and Trustees
- Any Other Business of which due notice in the form of the Resolution to be proposed has been given to the Honorary Secretary, signed by not less than 2 Members, not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting.
- Election of Office Bearers, Members of the Executive Committee, and Trustees

**From 2.00 p.m. Film**

*Nomination forms for office bearers or Executive Committee members may be collected from the office or requested by e-mail.*

## Local communities to be involved in developments at Tana River Delta

*Cont'd from page 1*

rights of all stakeholders, indigenous peoples and wildlife", says Ms. Serah Munguti, the Advocacy Manager of Nature Kenya.

**Poverty and environmental destruction**

The Delta's landscape is a vast patchwork of habitats including savannah, forests, grasslands, wetlands, beaches, lakes, mangrove swamps and the Tana River itself. It provides the resources that local communities rely on for their livelihoods – herders who depend on the water and grasslands during the dry season, farmers who cultivate rice, mangoes and other crops and fishermen who fish from its lakes and watercourses.

Although rainfall is unreliable and soils are sandy and prone to seawater intrusion, the Delta is viewed as fertile. Now, more than half a dozen companies are poised to try and reap its potential riches. The developers claim that they will reduce poverty in the Delta. However, there is no clarity in land allocation and no central decision-making and management for development. In the rush for riches, the rights of the local people are often ignored. All large-scale projects that have been attempted in the Tana Delta in the last half century have failed, and many of them left a trail of poverty and environmental destruction.

Nature Kenya, together with other conservation partners, has worked with communities for six years to promote ecological sustainability in the Tana Delta. This partnership is also supporting the efforts of the Office of the Prime Minister together with other state agencies and ministries to develop a multiple land use plan for the Tana Delta. Nature Kenya also collaborated with the Kenya Red Cross to help the victims of the recent clashes experienced in the area.

In October 2012 the Tana Delta was designated Kenya's newest Ramsar site. The Delta is designated an Important Bird Area by BirdLife International, Key Biodiversity Area by Conservation International and it is one of Kenya's Endemic Bird Areas.

## BirdLife World Congress 2013

*P. Matiku*

BirdLife International is the world's largest civil society partnership for nature. Nature Kenya – as the BirdLife International Partner for Kenya – announces that the BirdLife International World Congress will be held from June 19 through 22, 2013 in Ottawa, Canada, hosted by the BirdLife Partners in Canada – Nature Canada and Bird Studies Canada. The World Congress promises to be one of the world's greatest gatherings of local conservation leaders, from over 120 countries.

"The "power of many" is a really exciting time for BirdLife," says Dr Marco Lambertini, the Chief Executive of BirdLife International. "Ninety years on from the foundation of BirdLife, old and new threats to nature are growing in number and scale, but so is the awareness and knowledge in our hands. We can turn the tide of today's ecological crisis. BirdLife can capitalize on its "power of many", the unique Partnership of over one hundred civil society conservation organizations and thousands of local groups that work together to ensure long term sustainable impact on the ground and at the community level. Together we speak with one voice for nature, together we share resources and maximize impact."

If you wish to attend the World Congress in Ottawa and you are able to pay for your participation, you may now register at www.birdlifecongress.org <http://www.birdlifecongress.org> . Remember that choices of hotel will become more limited as it gets closer to the start of the Congress.

The atmosphere will be energising, challenging and inspiring. The congress theme "Partnerships for Nature & People" highlights that we cannot treat the loss of biodiversity as an issue separate from the core concerns of society. The congress will showcase that reducing poverty and improving the health, wealth and security of people are inextricably linked to biodiversity.
Amidst tours into Canada's wilderness and evening festivities, BirdLife is unveiling its new 2020 vision. As the oldest international conservation organisation – in its 90th birthday – Birdlife has a rich history of pioneering achievements and innovation, which attendees will be able to draw on and enrich during the congress. For details on themes, programme and how to register please visit <http://www.birdlifecongress.org>

## Revised edition of Upland Kenya Wild Flowers and Ferns launched!

*F. Ng'weno, E. Mwongela*

The completely revised third edition of Upland Kenya Wild Flowers and Ferns was launched by the author, Dr Andrew Agnew, last month. Speakers at the launch included Dr Alan Carles, Chairman of the East Africa Natural History Society; Dr Itambo Malombe and Dr Siro Masinde of the National Museum's East African Herbarium; and Prof Len Newton of Kenyatta University.

Upland Kenya Wild Flowers and Ferns is a key to the flowers, ferns, grasses and sedges of highland Kenya from Kisumu to Machakos. It is illustrated with 200 plates of black and white line drawings. The book is available at the Nature Kenya shop at Ksh. 2,300/- for members and 2,500/- for non-members. A discount is available for orders of ten or more books.

*Prof. John Kokwaro of the University of Nairobi presenting a gift to Dr. Agnew to celebrate his mentorship almost fifty years ago. Both are former chairmen of the EANHS* *Pic: E.Mwongela*

For updates go to
**www.naturekenya.org**

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# naturalist

## Go out and look at the evening sky...

F. Ng'weno

### Comet PanSTARRS

Comet PanSTARRS may be visible over the sunset on March 12, 13 and 14, 2013. Look for a fuzzy, hazy spot of light near the crescent moon.

The comet travels past the Earth on March 5, and past the sun on March 10, 2013. Astronomers do not know whether Comet PanSTARRS will brighten or break up as it nears the warmth of the sun. Look for it from March 12, low in the west just after sunset.

Another comet, even brighter, will appear towards the end of 2013. Comets are giant balls of ice and dust that orbit the sun in long, elliptical orbits. For more information see http://science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/

### Planets, March 2013

At sunset, bright Jupiter is overhead, a little to the west. The reddish star Aldebaran seems close to Jupiter. The moon is near Jupiter on March 17 and 18.

The planet Saturn rises in the east as Jupiter sets in the west, and is high in the west at dawn. The moon is near Saturn on March 2. Venus is out of sight this month.

### March stars

Sirius the brightest star, also Sirius the brightest star, also called the Dog Star, is high in the south at sunset. Canopus, the second brightest star, is below Sirius in the south. The bright star Procyon, the "little dog", is overhead, north of Sirius. (To the ancient Greeks, the bright "dog stars" followed the Warrior, Orion, across the sky. The Greeks did not see Canopus, as it is only visible further south.)

The constellations of Orion - the Hunter or Warrior; Taurus - the Bull; and Auriga - the Charioteer (See February Sky), are now high in the northwest. The star Capella is bright in the northwest. The Pleiades - a cluster of stars close together - is dipping towards the sunset. The Milky Way, a pale band formed by millions of stars, passes between Sirius and Procyon, past Orion's orange shoulder Betelgeuse and past Capella, from southeast to northwest.

### Moon, March 2013

March 4 - last quarter, 'half' moon overhead at dawn. March 11 - new moon. Look for the crescent moon and the fuzzy comet over the sunset on March 12 and 13.
March 19 - first quarter; 'half' moon overhead at sunset. March 27 - full moon.

### March sun

In February and part of March the sun rises and sets late here on the equator. March 20 is the equinox - when day and night are of equal length, all over the world. The Sunday after the full moon after the equinox - March 31 this year - is Easter Sunday.

Invest in the future of our natural environment by leaving a living legacy in your will –
Enquiries will be kept confidential


## Conservationist David Ngala named Disney Conservation Hero 2012

*The Director of the Kenya Forest Service, David Mbugua, presents the DisneyConservation Hero award to David Ngala for his dedicated work at Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. David Ngala was nominated as a Disney Conservation Hero by The Peregrine Fund. Those who have visited Arabuko-Sokoke Forest will know Ngala as a brilliant bird guide who has worked tirelessly for the conservation of the forest. Pic: M. Virani*

## World Bird Watch 2012

P. Wairashio

Nine teams took part in World Bird Watch on October 6 and/or 7 2012 and sent their bird lists to Nature Kenya. Congratulations to Naivasha North Lake Group and Mombasa Birders for seeing 100 species or more in their birding areas!

Grey Crowned Cranes - now listed as endangered - were seen on Kaitet Estate Nandi Hills, Sergoit Hill and Lake Naivasha. The Mombasa Birders saw Madagascar Pond Heron (formerly called Madagascar Squacco Heron), a migrant from the South, which is also endangered. A summary is below:

| Group | Site Visited | No. of spp observed |
|---|---|---|
| Sergoit Hill Group | Sergoit Hill (square 49A | 87 |
| Kaitet Group | Kaitet Estate, Nandi Hills | 34 |
| SONABIC | South Nandi | 29 |
| Naivasha North Lake | Lentollia Farm near Crater lake | 102 |
| Stumble Team | Tree-Tops Salient Aberdares NP | 73 |
| Lets Go Spotters | Nandi Rd, Karen, Nairobi | 32 |
| Spring Valley Birders | Spring Valley Estate Nairobi | 43 |
| Nature Kenya Youth Comm. | Ol Donyo Sabuk NP | 43 |
| Mombasa Birders | Nguuni Animal Sanctuary and Husseini Dairy land | 100 |
| Mombasa Birders | Haller Park and Quarries | 51 |

# in the field

## MAR. 2013 AT A GLIMPSE

Mar 2 Friends of City Park Nature Walk
Mar 4 & 5 Office closed
Mar 6 Morning Birdwalk
Mar 9 Friends of Nairobi Arboretum Nature Walk
Mar 13 Morning birdwalk
Mar 17 Sunday birdwatch
Mar 20 Morning birdwalk
Mar 23 Day Trip to Mt. Suswa
Mar 25 Friends of Nairobi Arboretum Nature Walk
Mar 27 Morning birdwalk
Mar 28 Friends of Nairobi Arboretum Public Lecture
Bird ringing every Tuesday morning (check with Ornithology section, National Museums)

**Wednesday Morning Birdwalks** meet EVERY WEEK at 8:45 am at the back of the Nairobi Museum. The entrance is on Kipande Road.

**Sunday Birdwatch** (also called "Pot-luck Outings") meet the THIRD Sunday of each month at 9:00 am at the same location. Bring lunch.

**Mombasa Birdwalks** Contact Marlene Reid through <donreid@africaonline.co.ke> or call 0720-949195 for more information.

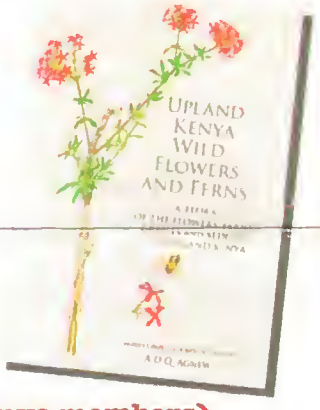
*Contact the office for information on other birdwalks in Kakamega, Kisumu, and other sites*

**Ngong Forest walks** - 1st and 3rd Saturday at 9.00 a.m. Contact Simon 0729-840715

## AVAILABLE AT THE NATURE KENYA SHOP: Upland Kenya Wild Flowers

**Third completely revised edition of Upland Kenya Wild Flowers and ferns**
*by Andrew Agnew*

*A flora of the flowers, ferns, grasses, and sedges of highland Kenya*




For more information:
office@naturekenya.org
or telephone 020 3537568/
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## TWENDE SUSWA!!!

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